

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11-15, 19-25, and 27-42 are pending. New claims 5, 11, 28-42 have been added to include broader claims not limited to a plurality of inlets. No new matter has been added as a result of this amendment. Support for new claims 28-42 can be found on e.g., p. 4, lines 6-8; p. 7, line 14; and p. 13, line 5. The changes are shown with strikethrough for deleted matter and underlining for added matter.

October 17, 2003 Interview

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Thu Khanh T. Nguyen for the courtesies extended to its undersigned representatives during a personal interview on October 17, 2003. The Examiner has graciously considered the newly amended claims in the Preliminary Amendment accompanying the RCE that were filed on 9/02/03. The Interview Summary reflects the Examiner's position that "[t]he amended claims with multiple inlets have been considered and seem to overcome the prior art of record." As further reflected in the Interview Summary of record, there was discussion concerning the filing of new claims that did not recite multiple inlets. The Examiner indicated that such claims (*i.e.*, claims 28-42) would be considered upon further search.

October 20, 2003 Telephonic Interview

Examiner Thu Khanh T. Nguyen telephoned the undersigned on October 20, 2003 and indicated that new claims, not limited to multiple inlets, would be allowable if appropriately amended to include a pump upstream of the manifold. Although Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner concerning the need to incorporate this additional limitation, in an effort to expedite issuance of the subject application, newly added base claims 28-30 and 37 incorporate a pump upstream without the multiple inlet limitation as agreed. Applicants reserve their right to seek broader claims in subsequent continuation applications.

While relying on the multiple inlet limitation in the amended claims, filed 9/02/03, it is important to note that newly added claims 28-46 do not require this limitation.

The specification clearly provides support for a definition of a manifold of the present invention not being limited to a plurality of inlets, but having one inlet as well:

The manifold comprises a chamber with a hollow interior which receives the material, at least one inlet for feeding the material into the manifold and a roller which discharges the starting material upon a surface, such as a casting belt (p. 4, lines 6-9). See also p. 7, line 14 and p. 13, lines 5 and 20-21.

Accordingly, Applicant has added new base claims 28-30 and 37 which recite a manifold that does not require a plurality of inlets, but rather recites comprising "at least one inlet."

Claim Objections under 37 C.F.R. 1.75

Claims 20, 21, and 22 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 17-19, respectively. Applicant's cancellation of claims 17 and 18 obviates the objection with respect to these claims. During the personal interview, the Examiner agreed that claims 19 and 22 were of a different scope.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Claim Rejections

Independent Claims 17 and 19

Claims 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for the pump to operate at a pressure up to 150 psi (page 5, line 22), does not reasonably provide enablement for a pump to operate at a pressure of at least 1 psi.

During the personal interview, the Examiner agreed that in light of Applicants' previous arguments, 1 psi is interpreted as 1 psi above atmospheric pressure.

Independent Claim 18

Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite in its recitation of the phrase, "said manifold being removably

mountable mounted adjacent said casting belt.” In view of Applicant’s amendment, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Claim Rejections

Independent Claims 17, 20, and 22

Dependent Claim 3

Claims 3, 17, 20, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese reference, JP-59133. During the personal interview, the Examiner agreed in light of Applicants’ previous arguments concerning the prior art not disclosing multiple inlets, JP-59133 not anticipate claims 3, 17, 20, and 22.

To the extent that JP-59133 may be applied against the newly added claims 28-42 embracing “at least one inlet,” Applicants’ incorporation of a pump upstream of the manifold distinguishes the claimed invention from the prior art.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Claim Rejections

Independent Claims 17-22

Dependent Claims 3-6, 9-15

Claims 3-6, 9-15 and 17-22 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Driessen (U.S. 4,790,242) in view of Japanese reference (59,133) and the Perry’s Chemical Engineer’s Handbook (pages 10-34 to 10-35).

Applicant’s direct the Examiner’s attention to the arguments set forth in the Preliminary Amendment, filed 9/02/03. Neither of the prior art references disclose or suggest, individually or in combination, a pump upstream of a manifold, nor a roller in combination with a manifold having a plurality of inlets so as to render obvious claims 3-6, 9-15, and 17-22. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

With respect to newly added claims 28-42, Applicants add that neither of the references provides a motivation or factual basis for moving the screw of JP-59133 located *within* its alleged manifold and/or the screw pump of Perry’s Chemical Engineer’s Handbook *upstream* of the Driessen in

accordance with the newly claimed subject matter. Neither Driessen, nor JP-59133 describe any problem of tearing or clogging of viscous material that would warrant incorporation of a roller into the manifold of Driessen. The roller of JP-59133 was used with a completely different type of non-molten material not susceptible to the same types of tearing, clogging or streaking problems observed when processing molten, viscous material in accordance with the present invention.

Dependent Claims 2 and 8

Claims 2-8 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Driessen (U.S. 4,790,242) in view of Japanese reference (59,133) as applied to claims 3-6, 9-15 and 17-22 above, and further in view of Collins (4,815,370). Upon consideration of Applicant's arguments directed to the rejection over claims 3-6, 9-15 and 17-22 above, as set forth in the Preliminary Amendment, filed 9/02/03, reconsideration of the rejection over dependent claims 2 and 8 is respectfully requested. To the extent these references may be considered in evaluating obviousness with respect to the newly added claims 28-42, Applicants rely on these same arguments to distinguish the newly claimed invention from the prior art.

Dependent Claims 23 and 25-27

Claims 23 and 25-27 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Driessen (U.S. 4,790,242) and the Japanese reference (59,133) as applied to claims 9-15, 19, 21 and 22 above, and further in view of Charles (4,061,794). Upon consideration of Applicant's arguments directed to the rejection over claims 3-6, 9-15 and 17-22 above, as set forth in the Preliminary Amendment, filed 9/02/03, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection over dependent claims 23 and 25-27 is respectfully requested. To the extent these references may be considered in evaluating obviousness with respect to the newly added claims 28-42, Applicants rely on these same arguments to distinguish the newly claimed invention from the prior art.

Independent Claims 17 and 20

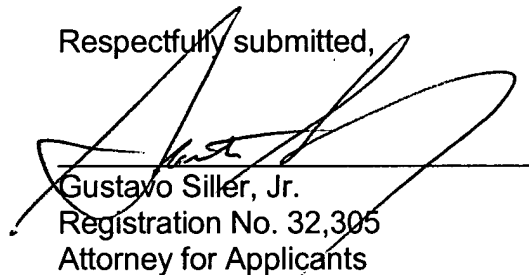
Dependent Claims 3-6

Claims 3-6, 17, and 20 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Driessen (U.S. 4,790,242) in view of Swanson (4,293,290) and the Japanese reference (59,133).

Upon consideration of Applicant's arguments directed to the obviousness rejection of claims 3-6, 9-15 and 17-22 over Driessen and JP-59,133 above, and as set forth in the Preliminary Amendment, filed 9/02/03, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection as applied to claims 3-6, 17, and 20 is respectfully requested. To the extent these references may be considered in evaluating obviousness with respect to the newly added claims 28-42, Applicants rely on these same arguments to distinguish the newly claimed invention from the prior art.

Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seek an early allowance thereof. If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application in the next Office Action, Applicants respectfully request an interview with the undersigned attorney or agent to discuss any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,



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